

Message Text

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ORIGIN EB-07

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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FOLLOWING REPEAT BANGKOK 34568 ACTION SECSTATE INFO
FAA PC-IFO-51 GUAM DTD 27 DEC

QTE

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DEPT PLEASE PASS FAA/NTSB

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAIR, ASAF, TH
SUBJ: CIVAIR: CRASH OF EGYPT AIR 707

REF: STATE 310874

1. OFFICE OF DIRECTOR GENERAL, DEPARTMENT OF AVIATION
(DOA), INFORMED EMBASSY ORALLY AT 1500 LOCAL DEC 27
THAT DIRECTOR GENERAL OF DOA AND RTAF OFFICER HEADING
ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE (SEE BELOW) " HAVE NO
OBJECTION" REPEAT "NO OBJECTION" TO PARTICIPATION BY
NTSB TEAM IN 707 CRASH INQUIRY. WE BELIEVE THIS IS
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AS NEAR AS WE WILL GET TO FORMAL "INVITATION"FROM RTG
TO NTSB.

2. EMOBOFF AND AIR ATTACHE (DAT) ON DEC 26 VISITED CRASH
SITE ON FLIGHT PATH 1.2 NAUTICAL MILES SHORT OF RUNWAY
21 L AT DON MUANG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT WHERE EGYPT AIR

JETLINER CRASHED ON FINAL APPROACH AT 0345 DEC 25.

3. AIR CRAFT WAS BOEING 707, REGISTRY SUAXA ON SCHEDULED FLIGHT NO. 864 FROM ROME TO TOKYO WITH STOPS AT CAIRO, BOMBAY, BANGKOK AND MANILA. TEAM OF EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS ARRIVED IN BANGKOK DEC 26 TO PARTICIPATE IN INVESTIGATION. RTG HAS FORMED JOINT MINISTRY OF DEFENSE-MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS TEAM, HEADED BY AIR CHIEF MARSHAL KAMROM LEELASIRI TO CONDUCT INQUIRY.

4. INITIAL REPORTS INDICATE THAT AIRCRAFT COMMANDER, AMIN SHAHAD, MADE TWO PREVIOUS APPROACHES TO DON MUANG BEGINNING AT ABOUT 0300 DEC 25, BUT DECIDED TO GO-AROUND AFTER DON MUANG TOWER REPORTEDLY CAUTIONED HIM ABOUT POOR VISIBILITY (FOUR KILOMETERS) AS RESULT HEAVY FOG APPROACHING FROM THE NORTH. THE COMMANDER'S FINAL TRNASMISSION REPORTEDLY INDICATED HE HAD THE FIELD IN SIGHT AND WAS BEGINNING HIS LANDING DESCENT.

5. OBSERVATION AT THE CRASH SITE INDICATES AIRCRAFT WAS ABOUT 100 FEET TO RIGHT OF CENTERLINE, AS WELL AS 1.2 NAUTICAL MILES SHORT, OF RUNWAY 21 L AT IMPACT. IT FIRST SHEARED OFF ABOUT 10 FEET OF A ROW OF 40-FOOT HIGH PALM TREES ABOUT 125 FEET FROM THE POINT OF IMPACT, PASSED THROUGH THE SECOND STOREY OF A WOOD FRAME WORKERS' DORMITORY 25 FEET FROM THE IMPACT POINT, THEN CRASHED INTO A TEXTILE FACTORY. THE AIRCRAFT WAS SHREDDED BY STRIKING THE BUILDING'S STEEL GIRDERS AND MACHINES ANCHORED IN CONCRETE, THEN EXPLODED INTO FLAMES. THE FIRE BURNED UNTIL EXTINGUISHED AT 0600. LARGEST LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PIECE OF METAL VISIBLE FROM ATOP MOUND OF WRECKAGE WAS SIX-FOOT BY FOUR-FOOT SECTION OF ALUMINUM SKIN; HOWEVER, CRANE CREW SUBSEQUENTLY RECOVERED 30-FOOT WING SECTION, AND PORTION OF ONE ENGINE FAN ALSO STILL PARTLY IN TACT. ENTIRE CRASH SITE IS CONTAINED WITHIN FACTORY WALLS AND MEASURES ONLY ABOUT 25 YARDS BY 25 YARDS.

6. ACCORDING LATEST INFO, 43 PASSENGERS, CREW OF NINE, AND 18 FACTORY WORKERS WERE BURNED BEYOND RECOGNITION. AS OF EVENING DEC 26, POLICE SAID 23 BODIES HAD BEEN IDENTIFIED. MANY REMAIN BURIED UNDER WRECKAGE.

7. AIRPORT OFFICIALS, WHO HAVE LISTENED TO TOWER VOICE RECORDINGS, SPECULATE THAT IN FOG AIRCRAFT COMMANDER THOUGHT LIGHTS OF FACTORY, WHICH IS DIRECTLY ALONG FLIGHT PATH, WERE THE RUNWAY LIGHTS. AIR VICE MARSHAL SIRAYUT NIWATABUT, THE RTAF'S DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIAITION, TOLD EMBOFF THERE WAS NO INDICATION AIRCRAFT WAS IN TROUBLE.

HE IMPLIED, BUT WOULD NOT SAY, THAT CRASH WAS RESULT OF PILOT ERROR. INVESTIGATING OFFICIALS ARE EQUIVOCAL AS TO WHETHER OR NOT "BLACK BOX" HAS BEEN RECOVERED.

8. THE THAILAND AIP PUBLISHED MINIMUMS FOR BANGKOK INTERNATIONAL RWY 21 L WOULD HAVE PUT THE AIRCRAFT AT 500 FT. FOR A CIRCLING APPROACH OR 400 FT. AT 1 MILE FOR A STRAIGHT-IN VOR APPROACH. THE IMPACT POINT IS APPROXIMATELY ONE-HALF MILE SHORT OF THE BEGINNING OF THE APPROACH LIGHTS FOR RWY 21 L.
BURKE UNQTE ROBINSON

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